

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, KE, TZ, US

SUBJECT: KENYA-TANZANIA RELATIONS: POSSIBLE U.S. ROLE

REF: STATE 132204

1. REFTEL ADDRESSES PROBLEM OF PROGRESSIVE DETERIORATION OF KENYA-TANZANIA RELATIONS, WHICH WE THINK IS AN ACCURATE DESCRIPTON OF CURRENT SITUATION DESPITE FACT THAT SERVICE BY SEVERAL AIRLINES BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES HAS BEEN RESUMED. AS WE SEE IT, BOTH COUNTRIES REGRET EXISTING STATE OF AFFAIRS, BUT EGO INVOLVEMENT OF LEADERS AND A CERTAIN IDEOLOGICAL DOGMATISM HAS IN PART PREVENTED ADOPTION OF PRAGMATIC SOLUTIONS TO OUTSTANDING ISSUES. AT SAME TIME THERE IS GROWING REALIZATION WITHIN KENYAN OFFICIAL AND BUSINESS CIRCLES THAT DISRUPTED TANZANIA-KENYA TRADE IS LESS DAMAGING TO KENYA THAN HAD BEEN THOUGHT AS TO CAN BE FAIRLY EASILY REPLACED OR OFFEST IN DEVELOPING TRADE RELATIONS WITH MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES AND, TO LIMITED EXTENT, OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

2. QUESTION POSED BY REFTEL IS WHETHER U.S. CAN FACILATE RAPPROCHMENT BY ASSISTING IN COMMUNICATIONS PROCESS BETWEEN TWO ESTRANGED GOVERNMENTS. OUR EXPERIENCE WITH TWO PREVIOUS APPROACHES TO KENYANS ON CONFIDENTIAL

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BEHALF OF TANZANIA SUGGESTS THAT COMMUNICATIONS IS NOT THE PROBLEM, IT IS STILL POSSIBLE FOR A KENYAN CIVIL SERVANT TO PICK UP THE PHONE AND DIRECT-DIAL HIS COUNTERPART IN DAR ES SALAAM, AND THIS STILL APPARENTLY BEING DONE. THE PROBLEM IS GETTING EACH GOVERNMENT TO FACE UP TO REALITY AND TAKE DECISIONS. IN EFFECT, WE WOULD HAVE TO BE WILLING TO LEAN ON EACH GOVERNMENT IF WE HOPED TO

ACHIEVE IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS, AND EVEN THEN THE PROPECTS ARE UNCERTAIN. IN OUR ESTIMATE, IT WOULD BE FAR PREFERABLE FOR THE TWO GOVERNMENTS TO SETTLE THEIR DIFFERENCES DIRECTLY. ONE POSITIVE STEP IN THIS DIRECTION WOULD BE FOR GOK AND TANGOV TO EXCHANGE RESIDENT DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES, THEREBY IMPLICITY ACKNOWLEDGING IRRELEVANCE OF EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY STRUCTURE THROUGH WHICH RELATIONS WERE OSTENSIBLY CONDUCTED IN THE PAST. IT MIGHT BE MOST USEFUL FOR US TO SUGGEST THIS STEP, RATHER THAN TO TAKE ON THE BURDEN OF MEDIATION.

3. AT THE MOMENT, VIRTUALLY ALL SENIOR KENYAN OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN RELATIONS WITH TANZANIA, INCLUDING FOREIGN MINISTER WAIYAKI, PRESIDENTIAL PERMSEC KARIITHI AND MFA PERMSEC NGANGA, ARE OUT OF KENYA. WHEN THEY RETURN THEIR FOCUS WILL BE ON LIBREVILLE OAU SUMMIT. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, PRESIDENT KENYATTA HAS RECEIVED NO FOREIGN DIPLOMAT FOR THREE MONTHS. DESPITE THESE PRACTICAL IMPEDIMENTS TO LAUNCHING A U.S. INITIATIVE, I INTEND TO EXPLORE CURRENT KENYAN PERCEPTIONS OF RELATIONS WITH TANZANIA WITH MFA ACTING PERMSEC JOHN MWAURA ON FRIDAY, JUNE 10, AND WILL ASSESS FEASIBILITY OF OUR ASSUMING MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN THE LIGHT OF WHAT I LEARN.

LINDSTROM

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